DN: email=mail@realpatidar.com Date: 2017.01.24 20:07:07 +05'30'

Series 44 -Momna of Kutch -Bombay Presidency Gazetter 1880 /

કચ્છના મોમના – મુંબઈ પ્રેસિડેનસી ગઝેટીઅર ૧૮૮૦

Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency 1880
Update: 13-Jan-2017 – Changed links to archive.org

06-Feb-2012

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|| જય લક્ષ્મીનારાયણ || || જય સનાતન ધર્મ ||

Bombay Presidency Gazetteer, Vol V, published in the year 1880, pertaining to Cutch (Kachchh) has some interesting information retailing to our community viz., the Kachchh Kadva Patidar Community also known as Momna community in those days. બોમ્બે પ્રેસિડેનસી ગઝેટીઅર, ખંડ ૫, વર્ષ ૧૮૮૦માં બહાર પાડવામાં આવેલ હતું, તેમાં કચ્છ પ્રદેશ ઉપર જાણકારી આપવામાં આવેલ છે અને ખાસ કરીને કચ્છ કડવા પાટીદાર જ્ઞાતિ, તે સમયે જેણે મોમના જ્ઞાતિ તરીકે ઓળખવામાં આવતી હતી, તે જ્ઞાતિના બારામાં ખુબ સારી માહિત પણ આપેલ છે.

Some of the important points worth nothing in this Gazetter is as under; આ ગેઝેટીઅરમાં અમુક ખાસ નોંધ લેવા જેવા મુદ્દાઓ આ પ્રમાણે છે;

1. In general, most classes of Muslims perform Hindu ceremonies. સામાન્ય રીતે ઘણા મુસ્લીમો હિંદુ રિવાજો પાળે છે.
2. In line with Taqiyya, Shia Muslims hide their identity. તાકિયાને ધ્યાનમાં રાખીને ને શિયા મુસલમાનો પોતાની ઓળખ છુપાવતા હોય છે.
3. Momnas are originally Hindus converted by Imam Shah to Musalman faith. મોમનાઓ મૂળમાં હિંદુઓ હતા જેમને ઈમામ શાહએ મુસલમાન બનાવ્યા.
4. Inspite of living in Kutch, Momnas speak Gujarati at home and not Kachchhi language. કચ્છમાં રહેતા હોવા છતાં, કચ્છી ના બોલી, ઘરોમાં ગુજરાતી ભાષા વાપરવામાં આવે છે.
5. Most Mumnas are poor.
   મોમનાઓ મોટા ભાગે ગરીબ છે.
6. Momnas are Shia Muslims in faith, but their names, habits, feelings and general mode of thought being Hindu.

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મોમનાઓ ધર્મે શિયા મુસલમાન છે, પણ તેમના નામો, આદતો, ભાવનાઓ, અને સામાન્ય વિચાર ધારા હિંદુઓની હોય છે.

7. Momnas observe "Janmasthami" & "Diwali" holidays.
   મોમનાઓ "જન્માષ્ઠમી" અને "દિવાળી" ત્યોહાર મનાવે છે.
8. Headquarters is at Manakuva (in those days -which is also true as per the information in our community).
   તે સમયે મોમનાઓનું મથક માનકવા માં હતું. – આ વાત આપણી જ્ઞાતિમાં પ્રચલિત માહિતી સાથે સુસંગત છે.
9. Head Man of the community or "ગેઢેરા" had sweeping powers.
   ગેઢેરાઓની જ્ઞાતિ પર મજબુત પકડ હોય છે.
10. Marriage ceremonies were first performed by Brahman and later by Syed. (in those days -which is also true as per the information in our community).
    લગ્ન વિધિ પહેલાં બ્રાહ્મણ કરે અને ત્યાર બાદ સૈય્યદ દ્વારા કરવામાં આવે છે. (તે સમયે – આ વાત આપણી જ્ઞાતિમાં પ્રચલિત માહિતી સાથે સુસંગત છે.)
11. They bury (not cremate) their dead.
    મુડદાને તેવો દાટે છે. (અગ્નિ સંસ્કાર નથી કરતા).
12. They have ***Khanas*** of prayers. (Even today this is true.)
    પ્રાર્થના માટે તેઓ ***ખાનાઓ*** માં જાય છે. (આ વાત આપણી જ્ઞાતિમાં પ્રચલિત માહિતી સાથે સુસંગત છે.)
13. Children are not sent to schools. (in those days -which is also true as per the information in our community).
    છોકરાઓને શાળાઓમાં મોકલવામાં ન આવતા (તે સમયે – આ વાત આપણી જ્ઞાતિમાં પ્રચલિત માહિતી સાથે સુસંગત છે.)
14. Hindu Dasavatar book was corrupted to include Ali as Lord Vishnu's 10th avatar.
    હિંદુ દસવાતર ગ્રંથને ભ્રષ્ટ કરી અલીને વિષ્ણુનો દસમો અવતાર તરીકે બતાવામાં આવ્યો.
15. A body of not very learned Hindus assumes these (above mentioned Das Avatar) as true.
    અજ્ઞાન હિંદુઓનો એક સમુદાય ઉપર જણાવેલ દસ અવતારની આ અવતારોની વાર્તાઓ ને સાચી માને છે.
16. Reasons why Khoja (and hence Pirana Satpanth) religion is much like the Hindu religion.
    ખોજાઓનો ધર્મ (અને તે કારણે પીરાણા સતપંથ ધર્મ) શા માટે હિંદુ ધર્મ સાથે મળતો જુલતો છે, તના કારણો.

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The above mentioned information documented by the British Government, once again, clearly gives proof that Satpanthis (Momnas) are Shia Musilms and their appearance may be of like Hindus, but by their faith they are muslims. Shia Muslims have practice of hiding their true identity. Hence accordingly, Satpanthis are also hiding their true identity.

અંગ્રેજ સરકારના દસ્તાવેજોમાં જણાવેલ જણાવેલ માહિતી ફરી એક વાર પુરવાર કરે છે કે સતપંથીઓ (મોમનાઓ) શિયા મુસલમાન છે. ભલે તેમનો દેખાવ હિંદુઓ જેવો છે પણ ધર્મે તેવો મુસલમાન છે. શિયા મુસલમાનો તેમની સાચી ઓળખ છુપાવતા હોય છે. તે પ્રમાણે સતપંથીઓ પણ પોતાની સાચી ઓળખ છુપાવે છે.

Read the full information here... / સંપૂર્ણ માહિતી અહીં વાંચી શકશો...

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GAZETTEER

OF THE

BOMBAY PRESIDENCY.

VOLUME V.

CUTCH, PÁLANPUR, AND MAHI KÁNTHA.

Under Government Orders.

Bombay:
PRINTED AT THE
GOVERNMENT CENTRAL PRESS.
1880.

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As far as possible the names of contributors are shown in the body of the book. Special acknowledgments are due, in Cutch, to the last Political Agent Colonel L. C. Barton, for papers on Description, Production, Trade, Manufactures, History, the Jádeja Court, and Places of Interest. The bulk of the Pálanpur account is taken from a memoir prepared by the last Political Agent Major J. W. Watson. For Mahi Kántha, Lieutenant-Colonel P. H. LeGeyt, the last, and Major E. W. West, the present, Political Agents, have supplied very valuable papers.

JAMES M. CAMPBELL.

February, 1880.

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Chapter III. Population.

Mod and Manái came into Cutch (1300), they wished to build a fortress on Kanthkot hill. But the ground was already taken by a devotee called Kanthadnáth, and at first as his wishes were not consulted, he threw down the walls as soon as they were built. At last he was appeased and the fort finished, and called after him. The devotee's descendants became herdsmen generally staying at a well at Manphario near Kanthkot. Ráo Bhármalji (1715), once passing, was entertained by Udekanthad the head of the community, and his whole army was fed from one small dish. In return the Ráo established Udekanthad as the head of a monastery and endowed it with the lands near the Manphario. They worship Ganesh and Kanthadnáth, using Kanthadnáth's name in telling their beads. Their chief temple is at Kanthkot where twice a day Kanthadnáth is worshipped. In taking a vow of celibacy and in almost all their customs they resemble the Dhinodhar Kánphatás.[1] They recruit chiefly from Áhirs and Rajputs.

Musalmáns.

Musalma'ns, according to the latest (1872) revised figures number 118,700 souls or 24·35 per cent of the whole Cutch population. Found over the whole province they are in greatest strength in Garda, Abdása, and Banni in the west and north-west, less numerous in Kánthi in the south, and fewest in Vágad in the east.

Cutch Musalmáns are partly immigrants, partly local converts. The immigrants from Sind and Gujarát are, some of them, of more or less foreign descent, and others purely Hindu. The local Musalmán converts are from among Cutch Hindus. With few exceptions their home tongue is Cutchi. Gujaráti is spoken by a few, and Urdu by still fewer. Some are landowners, traders especially to Bombay and Africa, and craftsmen, but most are cattle-dealers, soldiers, peasants, and servants. Except the trading classes, chiefly Memans and Khojás, and some Banni and Garda proprietors who are in easy circumstances, Cutch Musalmáns are generally much poorer than Cutch Hindus. By faith more are Sunnis than Shiás. At their chief family occasions, especially at marriages, most classes perform many Hindu ceremonies. At the beginning of a marriage the women meet in the early morning and sing songs. This is called *dhol-chháp* literally drum-beating. Dates are then handed round, and on all relations' houses gardeners' wives *bakálans*, tie *ásopal*, Polyalthia longifolia, garlands. Then the bridegroom loaded with ornaments is seated in a bower, *chauri*, and dates are again handed round. Few of them give their children much schooling or take to new pursuits. As a whole they are neither a rising nor a pushing class.

Muslims perform Hindu ceremonies

Syeds.

Syeds, numbering 1819 souls, are found over almost the whole of Cutch. According to tradition they represent different Syeds, who from time to time came from northern India and Sind. Of their history and dates no exact information is available. They have lost the special Syed appearance and differ little from other Cutch Musalmáns. Their home language is Cutchi. Generally

[1] Some of them are (1826) allowed to marry. But the fathers will not eat with their children until their ears are slit and other dedicatory rites performed. Burnes MS.

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In line with Taqiyya, Shias hide their identity

Musalmáns. *Syeds.*

neat and clean, some are hardworking, fairly honest, sober, and thrifty. Religious teachers, husbandmen, servants, and beggars, they are in middling condition, many of them in debt, but all with some credit. Sunnis in name, some are Shiás at heart. Marrying generally among themselves they form a separate and well-managed community. Their sons sometimes marry the daughters of Shaikhs and other foreign or local classes, but their daughters as a rule marry Syeds only. Except that the higher families portion their widowed daughters and do not let them re-marry, all follow Sunni customs. They do not give their children much schooling or take to new pursuits.

Shaikhs.

Shaikhs, numbering 75,549 souls, found in almost all Cutch villages, are said to be the descendants of local Hindu converts. In the north and east, leading a wandering life, they are strong wild-looking men, dark, with high noses, thick lips, long necks, and long streaming locks of hair. Their home tongue in the north is like Sindi, and in the east a rough Gujaráti. Though dirty and untidy most are hardworking, honest, and thrifty. They are cattle-dealers in the north, and in the east cultivators, cattle-dealers, and servants. Few want food or clothing and few are rich. Most have some credit and some debts, spending more than their savings on their family ceremonies. All are, at least in name, Sunnis, following religious guides, *pirs*, to whom some special fees and certain small yearly sums are paid. Early marriage is customary, for girls about five, and for boys about eight years. Marrying only among themselves they form separate communities generally settling their disputes by headmen chosen from themselves. Like Gujarát Musalmáns, pregnancy ceremonies are performed on the seventh or ninth month after conception, and the same rejoicings as in Gujarát mark the birth of the first son. On the sixth day the *chhathi* ceremony is held and relations feasted. Among the poor cooked food is distributed to relatives, who in exchange send uncooked grain, which is generally given to the midwife. Boys are circumcised in their third or fourth, and sometimes in their seventh, year. Sacrifice, *akika*, and initiation, *bismilláh*, ceremonies are rare. At betrothals and marriages many Hindu customs are observed. They are not a rising class. Very few give their children much schooling or take to new pursuits. A sect of Shaikhs numbering 1327 souls and inhabiting Sumrásar, a village about ten miles north of Bhuj, are professional beggars. In dress they differ from other Shaikhs only in wearing turbans of twisted black wool. They go from door to door beating small drums, *daflás*. Sunnis by faith they pay special reverence to Dáwal Sháh Pir.[1] Their ceremonies do not differ from those of other Shaikhs.

[1] The real name of this saint was Malik Abd-ul-latif the son of Muhammad Kuraishi, one of Mahmud Begada's nobles (1459-1511), whose title Dáwar-ul-mulk has been changed into Dáwal Sháh Pir. In reward for his penances Sháh A'lam Bukhári made him his disciple, and proclaimed him equal in rank to Sálár Mas'ud Ghází, a famous commander of Mahmud Ghaznavi's. This *pir*, given much to religious war, *jihád*, was, in the month of Zikaad 879 A.H. (1474 A.D.) slain by Deda Ranmalji at Amron near Jodia under Navánagar. Many offerings and sacrifices are made to this saint and throughout the whole of Gujarát and the Deccan his name is held in reverence by all classes of common people Hindus and Musalmáns. His followers observe many Hindu customs. Tárikh-ul-awliya by Syed Ahmad Gulshanábád.

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Chapter III. Population.

Musalmáns.

Moghals.

MOGHALS, 391 strong, scattered over different parts of Cutch are settled chiefly in Bhuj. Coming from Ahmedabad, Sind, and the North-West Provinces about 100 years ago, they are said to have at first been Shiás, and to have by degrees changed to the popular Cutch faith, and to be now staunch Sunnis. Their home tongue is Hindustáni much mixed with Cutchi and Gujaráti. Most of them servants, they are generally hardworking, honest, and cleanly. They are fairly well off, with in most cases, a certain amount of credit. They are all followers of the same religious head, *pir*, and marry generally among themselves. On special occasions, when there is a want of girls in their own class, they associate with Patháns. In their customs there is nothing peculiar. They seem content with their position as servants and do not take to any new pursuits or send their children to school.

Patháns.

PATHA'NS, numbering 936 souls, found chiefly in Bhuj, Mándvi, and Vágad, are said to be the descendants of Patháns brought from Ahmedabad by Ráo Khengárji in 1534, when, with the help of Sultán Bahádur (1526 - 1536) of Ahmedabad, he established himself as ruler of Cutch. Though by intermarriage they have lost their special size and strength, their long faces and sharp eyes still distinguish them from other Cutchis. Their home tongue is still Hindustáni though much mixed with Cutchi and Gujaráti. Almost all of them are soldiers, fairly hardworking, well-behaved, cool-tempered, and hospitable. Their condition is middling, all with some credit but many of them in debt and none able to save. Sunnis in faith some are religious, but without any special spiritual head. Marrying generally among themselves they form a separate community. Their customs do not differ from those of other Sunni Musalmáns. Among the more respectable families re-marriage is uncommon, widows dressing in white and wearing no ornaments. They give their children very little schooling, and are in no respect a rising class.

Momnás.

MOMNA'S, numbering 14,000 souls, are found in greatest numbers in the irrigated country to the north-west, south-east, and south-west of Bhuj, and chiefly in the *girásia* villages. Descendants of Hindus of various castes, they are, according to one account, said to have been converted to the Musalmán faith by Imámsháh, and a portion of them to have, after the great Momna revolt and defeat (1691) in Gujarát, fled to Cutch and settled at Shikra in Vágad. According to another account they were Leva Kanbis converted and called Momnás or *Momins*, believers, by Pir Sadr-ud-din who is said to have become their independent pontiff, *imám*.[1] Slightly made and dark, the Momnás shave the head except the top knot, and the face except the upper lip. The men wear coats, trousers, and three-cornered over-hanging turbans. Dark in colour, their women wear petticoats, jackets, and head cloths. Their home tongue is Gujaráti

[1] Bom. Gov. Sel. CLII. 47. According to their own account their ancestors the Gujarát Leva Kanbis were converted at Pátan by a Syed who met them there, and by taking them to the Ganges and bringing them back in a trice, induced them to become Musalmáns.

Momnas are originally Hindus converted by Imam Shah to Musalman faith

Inspite of living in Kutch, their Gujarati home tongue suggests, these people are immigrants from Gujarat.

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without any noticeable peculiarities. Untidy, but sober, quiet and hardworking, Momnás work chiefly as husbandmen and labourers. Very few are rich or well off, and many are in debt, but as a class they have enough for their daily wants. Shiás in faith they are Musalmáns in little more than name, their habits, feelings, and general mode of thought being Hindu. The ordinary form of salutation among themselves is the Shrávak phrase, *Johár johár*, and with others the ordinary Hindu form, *Rám, Rám;* although not knowing why, they keep the *janmáshtami* and *diváli* holidays dressing in their best and feasting. Though according to their own accounts they believe in Shet Syed of Pátan, the cultivators devote one-twentieth part of their income, and the labourers a rupee a year each to Imámsháh's shrine at Piráná.[1] The rich among them often, and the poor once in their life, go to visit his tomb at Piráná. Marrying among themselves they form a separate body with, at Mánkuva near Bhuj, a headman, *patel*, who settles all disputes. He has also the power of fining and excommunicating any one who breaks caste rules. His sanction is also necessary for widow marriage, any widow marrying without his consent being excommunicated. Murder and adultery are punished by excommunication, the offender being allowed to rejoin on paying a fine. They do not associate with Musalmáns, eat no flesh, do not circumcise, say no five daily prayers, and do not keep the *Ramzán* fast. On the sixth day after birth a red powder, *gulál*, cross is made on the ground by the women of the family and at the end of a month a Sárasvat Bráhman names the child.[2] The marriage day is fixed with the consent of both fathers. Four days before the appointed time a booth is built, and a garland hung round the bridegroom's neck. Women sing songs and dates are distributed. On the marriage day the bridegroom's father, with his relations and friends, forming a procession, *ján*, leads the bridegroom to the bride's house where the ceremony is performed first by a Bráhman and then by a Syed, a descendant of Imámsháh one of whom lives at every Momna settlement. The dying are bathed and a lamp fed with clarified butter is placed before them. God's name is uttered, and when life has gone the body is tied on a new cot, covered with a cotton cloth, and while the bearers repeat the words *Sáhib, Sáhib*,[3] is carried to the burial-ground, and buried. As in Gujarát, instead of a mosque, a dwelling, *khana*, with a lamp always burning in it, is set apart, and a seat, *gádi*, of Imámsháh kept in it, where the men every evening, and the women occasionally meet and worship. The cultivators set apart a fifth of the gross income of their farms as a gift to the *khána*. They give their children no schooling and take to no fresh callings.

Khojás.

Khoja's, honourable or worshipful converts, numbering 7253 souls, are found all over Cutch, chiefly on the south coast in Mándvi,

[1] According to another account they pay their dues to Sadr-ud-din's seat, *masnad*, in Gujarát. Bom. Gov. Sel. CLII. 47. Besides believing in Imámsháh and Sadr-ud-din they worship Bábo Velo a murdered robber and outlaw and his wife Rángad, a *sati* whose shrine is at Shikra in Vágad.

[2] Some of these Bráhmans believe in Muhammadan precepts.

[3] This is an invocation to their Lord and Master, the light that burns in their temple, to save the dead man's soul from hell.

Most Mumnas are poor

Shia Muslims in faith, but their names, habits, feelings and general mode of thought being Hindu.

Momnas observe "Janmasthami" & "Diwali" holidays

Headquarters is at Manakuva

Head Man or "ગેહેરા" had sweeping powers

Marriage ceremonies were first performed by Brahman and later by Syed.

They bury (not cremate) their dead.

They have *khanas* of prayers

Children are not sent to schools

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Chapter III. Population. Musalmáns. *Khojás.*

Mundra, and Anjár, and have an old and large settlement in Bhuj. Some of them claim Persian descent and say that they fled from Persia when their power was overthrown by Haláku the Tártár (1255). But most are probably of Hindu origin, some Sindis, others Cutchis, converted to the Khoja faith 400 years ago by Pir Sadr-ud-din. According to one account a detachment of them came from Sind about 1550 under the guidance of a certain Pir Dádu. Of middle size, strongly made and of fair complexion, they wear the beard short and the moustache long. They dress like other Cutchis and at home speak Cutchi without any marked peculiarity. They are well off, in no way scrimped for food or clothes. Many are able to meet special expenses, but some are forced to borrow. Thrifty and hardworking they are quiet and orderly. Most of them are traders, but if they seem likely to gain by it they are ready to take up any new calling. Several of them of late, prospering in trade, have, near Bhuj, sunk wells and built rest-houses. Shiás of the Nazárian Ismáili sect, they follow His Highness Ágha Khán whom they worship and obey as their unrevealed *imám* and hereditary chief, descended in direct line from Ismáil the son of Jáfar Sádik, the last of the revealed *imáms*, and from the 'Old Man of the Mountain,' *Shaikh-al-jabal*, otherwise known as Hasan-i-Sabbáh the originator of their faith and converter of their ancestors the terrible Assassins of Alamut. Their converter Pir Sadr-ud-din, a missionary, *dái*, of one of His Highness Ágha Khán's ancestors, is said to have introduced a religious book of ten incarnations, *dasavatár*, containing the nine incarnations of Vishnu and the incarnation of the most holy Ali as the tenth.[1] They have no mosques, but say their prayers, which consist of hearing the tenth chapter of the *dasavatár* and reciting the pedigree of His Highness Ágha Khán, in their assembly houses, *jamát kháns*. Sadr-ud-din, dying at Uchh in the Panjáb, some of his descendants settled at Kadi in the Gáikwár's territory, and were named Kadiwáls. One of the Kadiwáls, Ghulám Ali Sháh by name, came in 1792 to Kera in Cutch and being received by the Khojás with much honour settled there.[2] At his shrine a yearly fair is held in August (*Chaitra Sud* 11). Marrying among themselves, the Khojás form a distinct community whose caste disputes are settled by mass meetings. They have a treasurer or steward, *mukhi*, and an accountant, *kumária*, whose duty it is to collect and forward for transmission to His Highness Ágha Khán, as *imám*, wherever he may chance to reside, the contributions raised on his account by the community. They have lately shewn themselves anxious to give their children

Hindu Dasavatar book was corrupted to include Ali as 10th avatar.

Reasons why Khoja (and hence Pirana Satpanth) religion is much like the Hindu religion.

[1] The reason of the Khoja religion being so much like the Hindu, and of the writing of this treatise of *dasavatár*, is explained by the fact that the Shia missionaries, *dáis*, were always instructed to assume or admit the truth of the greater portion of the religious tenets of those whom they wished to convert. Hence the above treatise, intended to convert to the Ismáili faith a body of not very learned Hindus, assumes the nine incarnations of Vishnu to be true as far as they go, and supplements the imperfect Vishnavite system by superadding the cardinal doctrine of the Ismáilis, the incarnation, *avatár*, of the most holy Ali. Sir H. B. E. Frere, MacMillan's Magazine, XXXIV. 346 and 434.

[2] Details are given under the head "Kera."

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